

MGF 003-83

2 March 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR : Director, FBIS
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Gulf Bureau-February 1983

I. GENERAL

After a hiatus of over 2 years we began receiving Tehran television programming once again. A mid-day Arabic transmission and an early evening Persian transmission have now been added to regular coverage. Audio is generally good, but the video quality varies widely from day to day, seemingly being very sensitive to fluctuations in local weather conditions. We are hopeful that with the onset of warmer, and more stable weather our reception will improve even further. ✓

We lost coverage of Tehran television in September 1980 with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war when Tehran's booster station in Abadan was put out of commission in the initial Iraqi attacks on Iran.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. Our coverage of the early morning Tehran Persian casts bore unexpected fruit on 7 February when Tehran announced the start of the latest Iranian offensive against Iraq. This initial report triggered a heavy flow of traffic combining to produce the bureau's heaviest daily file ever--over 29,000 words.

Coincidentally, this all occurred on the first day of a planned, and prolonged, outage of our regular communications circuit through the embassy. However, our altroute circuit through the Navy's local Administrative Support Unit provided excellent service. The bureau received a pat on the back from the Wire for its prompt reporting.

2. As noted earlier, we are again covering Tehran Persian and Arabic television programming. However, reception of both audio and video seems to be adversely affected by the late winter wind and rain storms in the Gulf region. We expect reception to improve as weather conditions stabilize with the coming of summer. From our limited coverage so far it does not appear that television will provide much material unique from radio programming. However, as reception improves we should be able to provide worthwhile video footage on the Iran-Iraq war and on public appearances by Khomeyni and other leading Iranian officials.

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B. COMMUNICATION

1. On 7 February we lost our regular communications circuit through the embassy for a period of 6-8 weeks for a planned communications equipment upgrade. Since we had sufficient advance warning of the outage we were able to establish effective communications through our altroute circuit via the Navy's local Administrative Support Unit and through our own telex hookup. We hand carry pre-cut tapes to ASU several times daily, retrieving incoming copy at the same time. While not ideal, things are working satisfactorily. Hopefully by the end of March we'll be back to normal.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Our latest Farsi/Dari/Urdu monitor-trainee arrived late in the month and is settling in very nicely. He has had extensive experience in Persian/English translation work, working for many years in Tehran translating Persian newspaper items into English for publication in Tehran's English-language papers. We expect him to be totally operational in a very short time.

2. A son was born on 6 February to Arabic monitor [redacted] STAT
[redacted] and wife. Pleading that there is no Arabic equivalent, STAT
[redacted] declined bureau suggestions that he name his son [redacted] He SSTAT
also didn't think much of "FEEBUS". He chose "AYMAN".

STAT

[redacted]
Bureau Chief